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# Irish Philately

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**The Strabane 'Irish Spoon' cancellation**  
See the article by Alan Kane on page 39

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## EDITORIAL

Let me begin by apologising for the late arrival of this issue of Irish Philately. Nicky and I have been travelling, reaching parts we never expected to see!

First, let me start by welcoming a new author to our list of contributors, Dik Bakker from the Netherlands, who is finding Ireland's philately and postal history an enjoyable challenge. His article immediately follows this editorial.

Our travels began with a drive across Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden (spectacular bridge across to Malmo) to Stockholm, which we can recommend for a short break, a night ferry then taking us to Finland, the main purpose of our trip being to visit the International Exhibition 'Finlandia 2017' at Tampere.

Huge effort had been put into the 'Show'; the basic arrangements could not be faulted with advertising all over the town, spacious and spotless Halls. One could not move without falling over meeters, greeters, stewards and the like and of course they all spoke perfect English (it did not take us long to realise that the Finnish language was quite impossible; within a half hour of arriving in the country we had stopped at a roadside 'café' for a spot of breakfast – perhaps appropriately, I picked up what turned out to be the children's menu – the first unpronounceable item I looked at comprised a single 27 letter word – enough said). Everywhere there were Judges, Commissioners and Officials of all ranks but was not there was the public coming to look and buy (very few dealers present and they must have been very disappointed at what they took). Layout within the Halls left much to be desired, the exhibits being spread over four floors; no doubt there was a logic but I did find it a little strange that the Irish postal history exhibits were in different Halls on different floors. There were some truly wonderful exhibits with, rightly, much emphasis on Finnish, the Baltic and Scandinavian areas, also Eastern and Central Europe. We surely learnt a lot of history from both exhibits and our travels.

Tampere has just over 200,000 residents with negligible population in the hinterland (trees and lakes do not buy stamps). Helsinki is two hours away and the entire country just over 5million people. If philately is to be promoted as a hobby, I do believe that major shows must be more accessible in major cities to attract collectors and dealers alike.

That said, we must thank all involved for the huge effort put in, not least Irish Commissioner, Héloïse Mitchell, much in evidence, busying herself taking care of her 'chickens'. Details of awards to members are given in the Newsletter.

Our voyage next took us to Tallinn in Estonia, a lovely city, then, getting within 300 yards of Russia, to Tartu in Eastern Estonia (an unexpected gem), Daugavpils in Latvia where we picked up some local beer to the delight of our concierge, he being a native of that town in a part of the world clearly struggling to find its way in Europe, Kaunas in Lithuania (a bit of a let down), Krakow which was delightful, Dresden a lovely city but still suffering a little to get over the tragic bombing of 70+ years ago, Frankfurt (work related and never the most exciting), buying wine (ours comes from the village of Graach an der Mosel); if you have never had the pleasure, it is a beautiful drive along the banks of Rhine and Moselle from Rüdesheim via Koblenz to Trier, thence via Luxembourg (efficient but dull, made up for by seeing friends), the Channel Tunnel (very quick) and back to a sunny London.

We enjoyed our trip enormously, all 3600 miles of it. We are very lucky to be able to do it, so 'tis now back to work and attending to the important things of life and our Journal in particular. And .....oh! - Nicky has a picture for me to put up!

Yes, Philately can get you everywhere. Everyone should try it!

Stan  
12 June 2017

## OUR OFFICERS

|                                |                                                         |                             |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| President:                     | John Greer, Dublin                                      | johngreer1A@gmail.com       |
| Vice president:                | James Rankin, Co. Antrim                                | jamesmrankin@btinternet.com |
| Secretary:                     | Brian Warren (acting)                                   |                             |
| Treasurer/Membership secretary | Brian Warren                                            | brian.warren2@upcmail.ie    |
| Editor and webmaster:          | Stan Challis, Guernsey and London                       | stan@roskelly.co.uk         |
| Auctioneer:                    | Rod Greer, Christchurch, England                        | rod.greer@hotmail.co.uk     |
| Irish area secretary:          | John Lennon, Dublin                                     | johnglennon@eircom.net      |
| Southern area secretary:       | Peter Wood, London                                      | peter.wood95@btinternet.com |
| Committee:                     | H Mitchell, D Quail and B Harmon plus those named above |                             |



## TWO POSTCARDS FROM IRELAND – HOW TO FALL INTO TRAPS

Dik Bakker

I had been a collector of Great Britain for quite some time. Then came the fateful moment when I found out that I was the proud owner all the English stamps that fitted in my budget. Now this could spell either the end of the hobby, or the start of a new collecting area. British colonies, the obvious choice, appeared to me to be too vast a domain to embark upon. Then one day, at my regular stamp dealer, I happened upon a comprehensive collection of Ireland. When leafing through the first few pages, with its so familiar George V stamps, now overprinted, I was immediately convinced that this was the direction to take. So, I bought the album, and started out on the journey to try and complete it, making it *my* collection. Concentrating on the 1922 overprints, I noticed that it was much easier to find the missing stamps in mint than in used condition. Especially the Seahorses turned out to be difficult in this respect. I did not appreciate that Ireland had many traps!

In order to be sure that cancellations are contemporary, one prefers examples of these stamps on a fragment or a complete piece rather than soaked off. At an auction, I managed to lay hands on a nice lot of covers from the period. The lot included some picture postcards from before Irish independence, still featuring the British stamps of the era, but with some nice cancellations. Two of these I would like to present here, since they introduce some puzzles for a Dutchman, who knows (too) little about Ireland, but who hopes that the well-informed reader might enlighten him a bit.

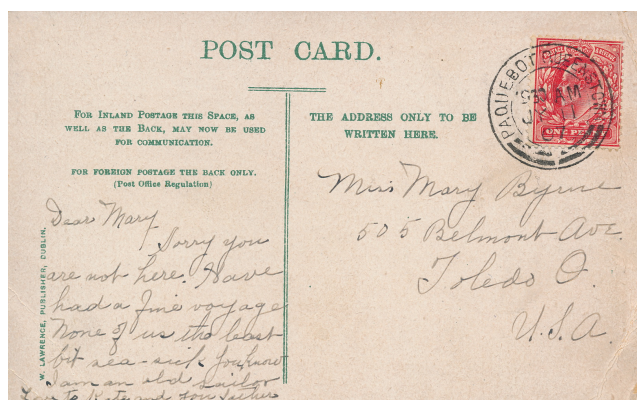
The first one of these cards is shown in *fig 1*. It was sent on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1907 from Queenstown, now Cobh, in County Cork. From this place, almost three million Irish left the country during the period 1848-1950, the majority of them to America. Less than five years after my card was sent, on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1912, this was the last port of call of the Titanic. It took 125 passengers on board here, of which a mere 44 survived the ship's maiden voyage; three years later, on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1915, a bit further to the West, the passenger liner Lusitania was sunk by a German U-boat, killing 1200 people. Facts to remember - and Cobh certainly does: for it has a monument for both disasters, and a museum dedicated to the Titanic.

Right in the middle of the photograph, St. Colman's Cathedral stands out. Building had started in 1867, but it was completed only in 1915. Here we see it still under construction, and without its tower. The rest of the scene has not changed too much since, as a Google maps street view suggests.



*Fig. 1 Queenstown (now Cobh) - the Promenade*

When we turn the card over, we see that it has been prepaid by means of a *one penny scarlet*, with the portrait of Edward VII (SG 219/20). It was cancelled on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1907 at 9:30 AM at Queenstown with the 'Paquebot' handstamp. The word 'Paquebot', is the French version of the English 'packet boat'. This term had been introduced recently by the U.P.U for mail posted on board ships that were officially allowed to carry mail. Judging from the written text, the sender had just arrived from America having crossed the Atlantic. Apparently, the crossing had been smooth, no one having been seasick.



*Fig. 2. the 'front' of the above card*

Interesting to me is the printed instruction on the top left. It reads 'For inland postage this space, as well as the back, may now be used for communication. For foreign postage the back only (Post Office Regulations).' So, the sender obviously violated these Regulations, since the card was heading for the U.S.A. (*Dik – this is trap 1 – I believe the rules had been changed at the UPU Rome Convention in 1906 to allow writing on what we postal historians regard as the 'front' - Ed*). The addition of the little word 'now' seems to suggest that the restriction to writing on the backside had been introduced recently. Or is it just an invitation to write something on the card now it is about to be sent?

International post cards from the same period that are in my collection and have been sent from other countries, such as Switzerland, also have the writing only on what we, but not the Postal Authorities, would call the front (picture) side.

More puzzling to me is the second card. It was sent almost exactly two years later, and is shown below (fig 3). It is a lovely, pastoral scene: children playing around a lock in a canal. The writing towards the bottom of the card tells us that we are close to Newport, (County) Mon, and at The Canal. The postmarks lead me to believe this is Ireland and my initial assumption was that this must be County Monaghan, and the canal the Ulster Canal. This runs for about half its 93 kilometres (c60 miles) through County Monaghan and for the other half through what is now Northern Ireland. It was constructed between 1831 and 1841 but was soon obsolete, since it turned out to be too narrow for contemporary boats that were more and more often propelled by steam. What we would be seeing here is one of its 26 locks.



Fig. 3 Canal and lock near Newport, County Mon

Curious about the current situation of what is shown here, I inspected every map available, but in vain. Even on the most detailed maps I was not able to locate a 'Newport' near the Ulster Canal. The only Newport that I could find in Ireland is on the West coast, in County Mayo and it lies on a river not a canal and thus I fell into my second trap!

Another trap! A word with the editor and he tells me this must be Newport now in 'County' Gwent, South Wales (but formerly known as Monmouthshire). The canal then must be the Monmouthshire canal, which starts near Newport. Today this canal is restored as a tourist attraction.

But fair enough, this is just a pretty picture; let us take a look at the front (fig 4). The card turns out to have been sent from more or less the same part of Ireland (Co Cork) as the first one, in fact not too far distant from Cobh. The stamp is again King Edward, this time the halfpenny green (SG 215/18), paying the inland tariff.

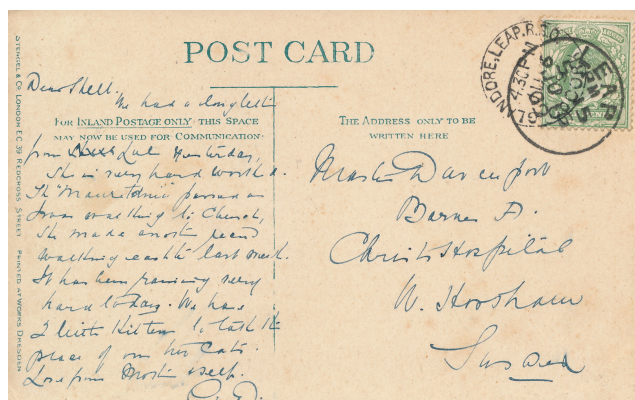


Fig. 4. Front of the card in figure 3

There are two cancellations, one from the place of origin, one from a place further en route. The card was first cancelled on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1909 at 4:30 PM in Glandore, a little seaport on the south coast, in Co Cork. Had someone forgotten to send it, when visiting England and only found this out only when back home in Ireland? Possibly, the written text reveals something about this but I find the message unreadable. The printed text on the top left again informs us about the restrictions with respect to writing but they obviously do not apply in this case. The second cancel has been applied 45 minutes later, at 5:15 PM in Leap, three kilometres North of Glandore. From there, the card was forwarded to its final destination, which, if I am right, would be someone at Christ's Hospital (which I discover is a well known school), located south of Horsham, Sussex, England.

Interesting to me now is the second cancellation, which, apart from date and time reads 'GLANDORE, LEAP R.S.O.', which I take to mean 'Glandore (via) Leap Railroad Sub Office'. Thus, a train cancel. This seems to suggest that, in 1909, there was a train connection between these two small places (Leap, today, boasts 240 inhabitants). However, such a railroad line does not show up on the very detailed railroad map I located, dating from 1906 and produced for the Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways and as far as I could see, neither of these two places has anything like a (former) railway station. And here I fall into my third trap, for the editor tells me that RSO postmarks were used at Railway Sub Offices, many of which were miles away from actual railway stations but offices for which a mail bag was made up on the Travelling Post Office on the railway and which received (and sent) their mail direct to the railway rather than via their Head Office. (*Leap RSO would have received mail via the railway at Skibbereen – Ed*)

Traps indeed; I can see that Ireland will give me a lot of fun but that I do have to look very carefully at everything and take nothing for granted!!



**IRISH AIRMAILS – FLIGHTS of 1932 – part 2**  
**Part XIII in a series of articles on the History of Air Mail in Ireland**  
Ronny Vogt

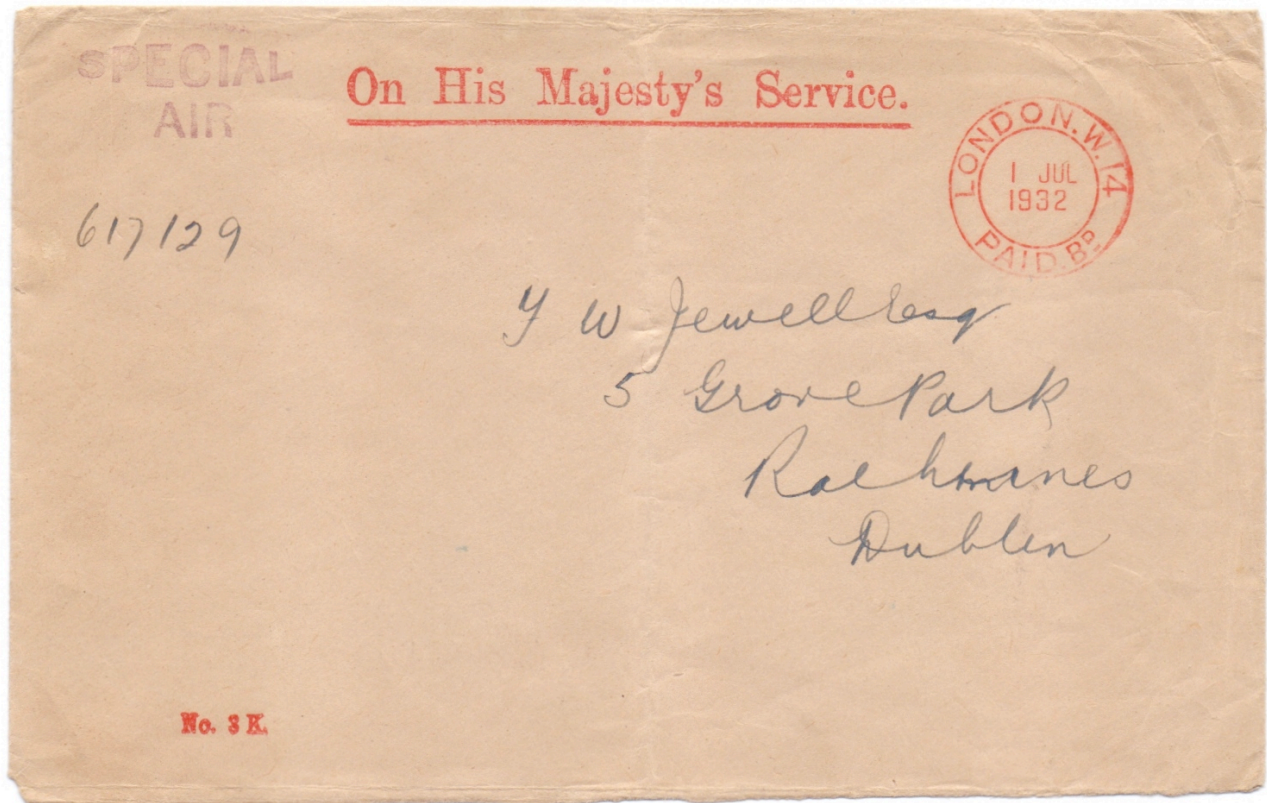


Illustration 12

### **The Bank of Ireland flight**

The early 1930s were financially unstable years giving rise to what was surely a unique flight. The story is not well known so let me provide a little background. In order to raise finance during the Great War, the British Government had issued no less than £2.087billion of 5% War Loan stock ('a gilt'). This was 'callable' in 1932. £2.087billion was a huge sum in those days (perhaps the equivalent of some £150billion today) and amounted to no less than 27% of the National Debt. The announcement was made on 30 June 1932 that the 5% stock would be called (ie: repaid) and replaced by a new 3½% stock with a minimum life (ie: not 'callable') of 20 years. As a bonus for those that converted to the new stock by 31 July, a 1% (taxfree) bonus would be paid. 3½% was an attractive 'safe' yield in 1932 and the success of the war loan conversion was enormous, with 92% of the outstanding issue being converted. There were many holders of the 5% stock in Ireland and timing was critical. The Bank of Ireland, Bank of England and the Post Office Saving Bank determined that there should be no delay in notifying stockholders in Ireland of the offer giving rise to a special airmail service from Croydon to Dublin on 1 July. Illustration 12 above is an example of the envelope

used by the Bank of Ireland to carry the notices on the special flight operating from Croydon to Dublin. Note the 'SPECIAL/ AIR' cachet at top left. As an aside the British Government did not 'call' the stock until March 2015, interest rates for most of the intervening years having been far above the 3½% rate that was so attractive in 1932. Our editor tells me that in the mid 1970s, he recalls buying £100 of the stock for about £18, giving a pre-tax yield of nearly 20%, but that was still below the then rate of inflation.

### **Acceptances to Australia and South Africa (including crashes)**

Good progress was made in 1932 with the route development to the East, to India and Australia and to the Far East, also southwards through Africa.

Charles Kingsford Smith's ANA All Australian Airways was hoping to leave England on 9 December 1931 in order to carry Christmas mails on an 'All Australian' flight back to Australia but bad luck (and two crashes) prevented a take off in December. Eventually a record flight resulted when finally take off was achieved on 17 January (illustrations 13 and 14 on the next page).





Illustration 13: Posted Dublin on 16 December, but only carried by ANA on 17 January London - Croydon. Sydney arrival postmark of 21 January. Exceptionally signed by Charles Kingsford Smith and Georgie Allan.



Illustration 14: Special ANA Christmas envelope, posted Dublin on 16 December and carried on 17 January London - Sydney. Forwarded by ship Sydney - New Zealand, with Sydney transit postmark of 21 January and Timaru arrival postmark of 28 January.



Illustration 15: Posted Dublin on 29 September and carried on 1 October on the first Imperial Airways flight London - Basrah - Kuwait. Kuwait arrival postmark of 8 October (see next column)

An example of the difficulties Imperial Airways experienced with the route development to Australia were the negotiations with the Persian Government who would not allow the flights to India to land in that country. On 1 October it was necessary to switch the route to the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf by way of Basra, Kuwait, Bahrain, Yas, Sharjah and Gwadar to Karachi (illustrations 15 - 17 provide examples of mail flown by the new route).



Illustration 16: Posted Dublin on 29 September and carried on 1 October on the first Imperial Airways flight London - Basrah - Kuwait - Bahrain. Bahrain arrival postmark of 7 October.



Illustration 17: an enlargement of the map on the cover above showing the detail of the route taken. In addition to the Bahrain cover above, I also have the same envelope (with the destination changed at top left in each case) carried on the same flight, directed to both Sharjah and Karachi, the latter being subsequently forwarded to Calcutta with a Calcutta arrival postmark of 11 October



In the early years, the Far East was a domain of the French and Dutch air services. In contrast to British and Australian services only very few Irish acceptances to and from the Far East and carried by French or Dutch services can be found. In December 1932, Air Orient carried Christmas mails from the Far East, connecting to their Saigon - Marseille service (illustrations 18 and 19).



Illustration 18: Posted Hong Kong on 6 December, forwarded by the French Messageries Maritime's vessel S.S. Aramis to Saigon, and thence carried by the Air Orient Christmas service Saigon - Marseille. This was the last usage of the red Hong Kong airmail postmark, double ring type M.



Illustration 19: A philatelic item carried by the same flight, this cancelled with the single ring Hong Kong postmark in red (code E).

Regular Imperial Airways services to South Africa were inaugurated on 20 January. Irish covers carried on this flight are plentiful (illustration 20). The return flight, leaving Cape Town on 27 January, proved to be most eventful in that two accidents occurred on the Salisbury - Broken Hill sector, and London was reached only on 16 February. The DH 66 Hercules G-AAJH 'City of Basra' was damaged while taxiing for take off from Salisbury on 29 January, with one wheel sinking into soft ground where an ant hill had been removed. The mails were transferred to a relief aircraft, the DH 66 Hercules

G-EBMX 'City of Delhi', but it encountered a violent storm between Salisbury and Broken Hill, some 50 miles south-east of Broken Hill, forcing the pilot to land in the only clearing available, which proved to be a swamp. The mail bags were transferred by native carriers to Broken Hill, from where they were forwarded again by air on 6 February (illustrations 21 and 22).



Illustration 20: Posted Dublin on 19 January and carried on 20 January by Imperial Airways over the full route London - Cape Town. Cape Town arrival postmark of 2 February. Signed by the flight engineer of the Cairo - Kisumu stage. Signed covers from this flight are most unusual.



Illustration 21: Posted Cape Town on 27 January and carried Cape Town - London, reaching London after two crashes only on February 16.



Illustration 22: Posted Victoria West on 27 January and carried Victoria West - Johannesburg - Athens, reaching Athens after the two crashes only on 13



This was not the last accident on the route to and from South Africa (illustration 23). The Imperial Airways Armstrong Whitworth Argosy G-EBOZ 'City of Arundel' operated northbound flight AN52 and encountered a dust storm on 9 March 1932, after leaving Khartoum the same morning. An engine stopped and lost its propeller. The pilot had to put the aircraft down near Kareima, alongside the River Nile, south of Wadi Halfa. After several days, a Short Calcutta flying boat arrived with a spare engine. Flight service AN52 left Cape Town on March 2 and reached Croydon only on March 15.



Illustration 23: Posted Nairobi on 5 March and carried by the service AN 52 Nairobi to Croydon and saved from the crash at Kareima. Only one other postcard, this addressed to London is known from this flight and also posted Nairobi on 5 March.

1932 also saw a big step forward for airmail services to South America, as Irish acceptances were now for the first time accepted on a regular basis for carriage on Zeppelin flights to South America (illustration 24). This was stiff competition for CGA/Air France (illustration 25) who had a huge advantage, offering regular weekly flights, compared to a total of 9 in the year by the Graf Zeppelin.



Illustration 24: First Irish acceptance for 1<sup>st</sup> Zeppelin flight in 1932, posted Dublin on 18 March, forwarded London - Berlin - Friedrichshafen, carried on 20 March by Zeppelin from Friedrichshafen to Recife and thence by Syndicato Condor from Recife to Rio. Rio de Janeiro arrival postmark of 24 March. Finally, Illustration 25 at the bottom of the page shows a commercial item posted at Dublin (Head Office) on 5 May, with correct 10s 10d postage for 1 oz, forwarded London - Paris - Toulouse and thence carried on 8 May with CGA/Air France service Toulouse - Buenos Aires with Buenos Aires arrival postmark of 16 May.

*To be continued in the September issue of Irish Philately*



### Illustration 25



# AN EXTRAORDINARY MAIL COACH ROBBERY

John Lennon

The above newspaper headline appeared over the description of the unbelievably casual behaviour of a mail coach guard.

A Journal of a Tour in Ireland, published in 1806, noted: *The Mail Coaches do not keep the same regular pace which distinguishes them in England. The distances between the stages are greater; and they are only timed at the stages so that they sometimes linger twenty minutes or half an hour at the door of some whiskey house, and afterwards make up the lost time by the most impetuous and dangerous driving.*

*In England the coach only stops to change horses, mail bags being dropped and picked up on the go. In Ireland, on the other hand, the coach has frequently to wait a quarter of an hour or more, at petty villages, until the letters are assorted or stamped.*

This attitude might explain the event that happened 14 years later, on 29 March 1820. It was reported, identically, in several newspapers.

**ROBBERY OF THE BELFAST MAIL COACH.**  
**ON WEDNESDAY** last, there was **STOLEN** out of the **LOCKER** of the **MAIL COACH** from **DUBLIN** for **BELFAST**, a **PARCEL**, directed to **Messrs. GORDON, BATT, & CO** **BELFAST**, containing **£2000** in their **NOTES**, also **£1000** of **HALF NOTES**, and **THIRTEEN** **ACCEPTED BILLS**, viz:—

| No.  | Drawer.              | Acceptor.              | Payee.       | £       | s.  | d.  |
|------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------|-----|-----|
| 2513 | William Pike         | On J. and R. Garratt   | W. Creetch   | 61 days | 100 | 0 0 |
| 2514 | John Elison          | Beggs, Jamieson & Co.  | W. Patterson |         | 100 | 0 0 |
| 2515 | Stewart & Cunningham | Chambers, Todd, & Co.  | T. Rodgers   |         | 200 | 0 0 |
| 2516 | Birnie & Cunningham  | Edward Clibborn        | James Magill |         | 300 | 0 0 |
| 2517 | William Garratt      | Alexander & Garratt    | S. R. Magill |         | 50  | 0 0 |
| 2518 | Jonathan Pike        | Simmons & Co.          | Ditto        |         | 128 | 3 7 |
| 2519 | William Coulson      | John Coulson           | A. Fulton    |         | 50  | 0 0 |
| 2520 | P. McAleese          | Beggs, Jamieson, & Co. | Jesse Millar |         | 50  | 0 0 |
| 2521 | William Duffin       | Sau. Dick & Co.        | Ditto        |         | 100 | 0 0 |
| 2522 | James Ferguson & Son | Chambers, Todd, & Co.  | Order        | 3 mths. | 100 | 0 0 |
| 2523 | Thomas Rice, jun.    | William Knox           | W. Lawrance  | 61 days | 200 | 0 0 |
| 2524 | Ditto                | Ditto                  | Ha. Begley   |         | 100 | 0 0 |
| 2525 | William Harlin       | J. and W. Henry        | Order        | 3 mths. | 50  | 0 0 |

Numbered in Red Ink on the left hand corner, and all the Bills accepted 28th March, 1820.  
 Payment of which being stopped, the Bills are of no use except to the Owners.—Any person giving information, leading to the recovery of the Bills or Notes, will be handsomely rewarded by applying either to Messrs. GORDON, BATT, & CO. BELFAST; or Messrs. WATSON & LAW, DUBLIN.  
 (64) Belfast, 3d April, 1820.

*About seven o'clock on the evening of Monday last, a female (genteely dressed) who called herself Mrs Johnston, went to the Belfast Mail Coach Office, in Sackville Street, and took four inside seats for the following Wednesday evening, for which she paid 8 guineas, and went away. On the Wednesday evening, previous to the coach starting from the office, Mr Boggan, who belongs to the Coach Office, seeing that Mrs Johnston, and the number of persons stated, had not arrived, went to examine the coach, and found that a man and woman had taken their seats therein. He asked them if they had any luggage, and was informed by the man that they would be met at the Canal bridge by two Gentlemen, who were to occupy the two remaining seats, and who would bring the luggage. The coach then drove off; on the arrival of which, at the turnpike gate of Drumcondra, the man called to the guard to stop,*

*saying, he thought he would have done so at the canal bridge, as at that place the coach was to have been met by two gentlemen, and some luggage, without which they could not proceed. He requested the guard to return with him to the bridge. Meantime he and the female alighted and walked towards the canal. In a little time, the man who had been foremost, requested the guard to take care of the lady while he went to seek his friends. The lady, however, had by this time disappeared also and the guard returned alone to the coach, which after waiting better than half an hour without being joined by the company, proceeded on its journey. On arrival of the coach at Newry, the parcels etc., were called over, when it was discovered that [several] parcels were missing, . . . all of which contained bank notes.*

*They had been safely locked up in the private locker of the coach, which is fitted up exclusively for the safe conveyance of Bankers', and other valuable parcels. Among the parcels were notes of the Belfast Bank, from the house of Messrs Watson and Law, Abbey Street, and also of the Bank of Sir W. Alexander and Co. There is little doubt of this robbery being the result of a preconcerted plan, and we would hope there is little doubt of those who committed it being detected by the vigilance of our police.*

The contemporaneous Almanack provides us with the following details of the Belfast Mail Coach —

Belfast Mail Coach, from the Hotel, 17 Up. Sackville-st. at ¼ before 8 P.M. thro' Ashbourne, Drogheda, Dunleer, Cattle-Bellingham, Dundalk, Newry, Banbridge, Dromore, Hillsborough, and Lisburn, arrives in Belfast at 9 next morning; leaves Belfast at 5 P.M. arrives in Dublin at 6 next morning.  
 \* \* Regular Packets are established at Donaghadee and Portpatrick, which sail from each place immediately after the arrival of the Mail; and Steam-Packets sail from Belfast for Glasgow twice a week. Information at the office in Sackville-st. of the days of sailing.

I have found no information on the apprehension of the perpetrators or the treatment of the Guard who had deserted his post. What was the coach driver doing when the locker was being broken open?

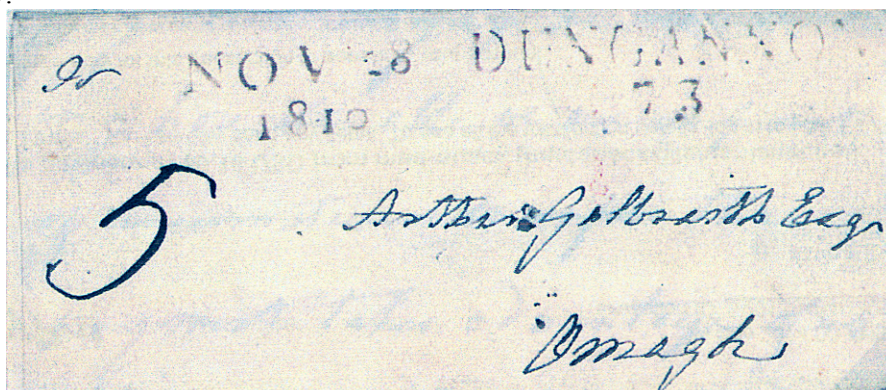
On 11 April, the Belfast newsletter reported that £1,600 of the Belfast bank-notes had been found in a court off Gregg's Lane (now Findlater Place) in the rear of the concern where the coach starts from. This was the Waterford Hotel, 17 Sackville Street.

It was incidents such as this that made the Post Office require that passengers boarded the coaches before they went to the GPO to pick up the Mails

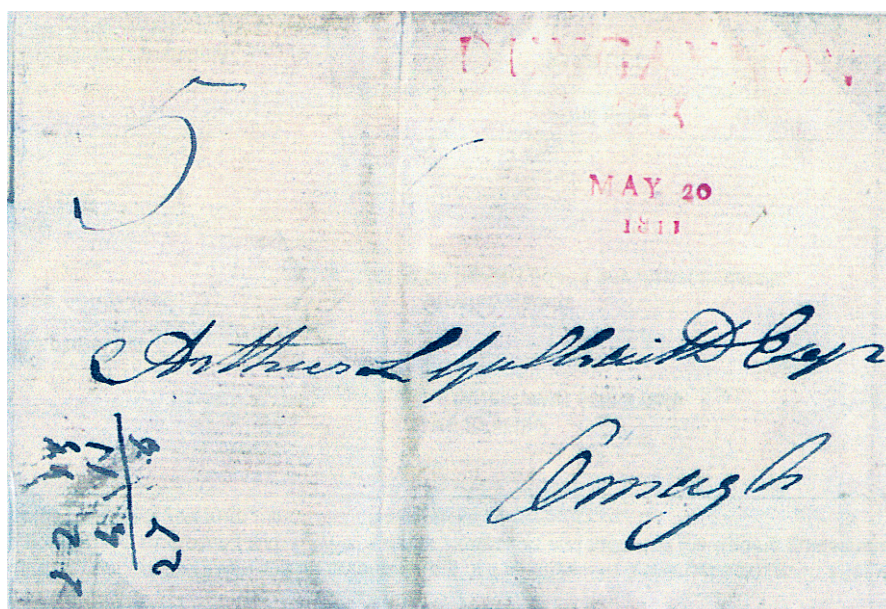
## MYSTERY DATESTAMPS FROM DUNGANNON

Editor (with thanks to Desmond Quail)

Some years ago, our previous President, Desmond Quail showed me two unusual marks in his collection both used from Dungannon. Dated 28 November 1810 and 20 May 1811 respectively, I shown scans of the two items below.



28 November 1810



20 May 1811

For me, these two prestamp items raise a number of questions and I am hopeful that at least one of our readers will be able to provide some answers or, at least, further examples.

It will be seen that both have the Dungannon/ 73 mileage mark, as would be expected. Black ink was used in 1810, red the following year; this I do not regard as being of any significance. I did in fact pen an article which appears in our June 2004 issue under the title 'The Road to Dungannon' noting that most (but not all) mileage marks after 1818 are found struck in red but this does help at all with my present query.

What interests me about these two items is the date marks. It was not the practice outside Dublin for any office to show any date in a postmark, the first dated provincial marks being known from c1829.

So why was Dungannon unique in having a datestamp, admittedly just a datestamp and not incorporating the town name as was to become the norm in larger towns 20 or so years later?

One might suppose that possibly the marks were of a private nature being struck either by the sender or by the recipient – it will be noted that both items are addressed to Arthur Galbraith at Omagh. But I think this can be discounted because the colour in each case is the same as the mileage mark, hence I believe that these must be Post Office marks.

Why have only these two examples been recorded and then both addressed to the same recipient in a nearby town. It is here, I think, the answer may lie – neither went via Dublin where a datestamp would have struck, so the Dungannon postmaster acquired his own datestamp – but how do we prove this????



# THE BACKGROUND TO THE 1922-23 DEFINITIVE ISSUE

Barry Cousins

*Our Former President, Barry Cousins was recently asked to provide a short paper at Westpex in California detailing some of the arrangements leading up to the issue of the first definitives in 1922-23. Particularly for our newer members, I annex his summary below as it provides a useful summary of the philatelic events of those turbulent years – Ed.*

## POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The first Dáil Eireann (Assembly of Ireland) was a revolutionary parliament illegally formed in 1919 by a breakaway group of 73 Sinn Féin Members of Parliament elected in the 1918 United Kingdom General Election.

These MP's refused to accept rule by the British Parliament and instead established an independent legislature in Dublin. This action in effect marked the beginning of the War of Independence.

Over time the warring parties commenced the process of reconciliation and the prospect of self-rule for Ireland became a reality.

The timetable of events was as follows:

### **December 6, 1921: Anglo Irish Treaty signed in London**

Treaty stipulated that the new Provisional Government of Ireland would frame a devolution Constitution for approval by the British Parliament within one year.

The First Dáil was replaced by the Second Dáil following the signing of this Treaty.

### **January 14, 1922**

The Second Dáil narrowly ratified the Treaty.

### **June 16, 1922**

A General Election in Ireland gave a pro-Treaty majority. However the election result triggered the start of the Civil War between Pro and Anti Treaty supporters, which continued until 1923.

### **September 21, 1922**

The Dáil completed the framework for the Constitution which would give independence to the twenty six Counties making up the Provinces of Connacht, Leinster, Munster and part of the Province of Ulster, with the remaining six Ulster Counties remaining a part of the United Kingdom.

### **December 6, 1922:**

#### **Anniversary of the Treaty Signing**

The Constitution was duly adopted by the British Parliament and the Third Dáil of 1922 - 1923, which was recognised by the British Government, for the first time.

Irish Free State was established, the Dáil becoming the Lower House was made up of elected Members and an Upper House made up of appointed Senators headed by a President.

### **January 1922**

With the formation of the Provisional Government it was recognised that postage stamps would be required to reflect Ireland's new status.

## POSTAL AUTHORITY IN TRANSITION

### **January 1922 to February 1922**

Both the British and Irish Postal Authorities acknowledged that dedicated Irish stamps could not be prepared in time and agreed that, as an interim measure, GB stamps would be overprinted to reflect the establishment of the Irish Provisional Government and which would be released on February 17, 1922.

### **February 1, 1922**

Ireland's Postmaster General (J. J. Walsh) by public announcement invited designs be submitted for dedicated Irish definitive stamps to supersede the use of stamps of Great Britain.

### **February 8, 1922**

Press release quote

*'The Postmaster General announces that pending the issue of Irish definitive stamps, that the current stamps of Great Britain would be overprinted in Gaelic to acknowledge Ireland's Free State status and issued shortly.'*

The five line Gaelic overprint adopted translated to 'Government Provisional of Ireland 1922'.

### **February 10, 1922**

Dollard Printing House was appointed as lead contractor by the Irish Post Office, Stores Branch, Aldborough House to overprint stamps.

Dollard took into account the capacity of their printing facilities and the prescribed deadlines, and

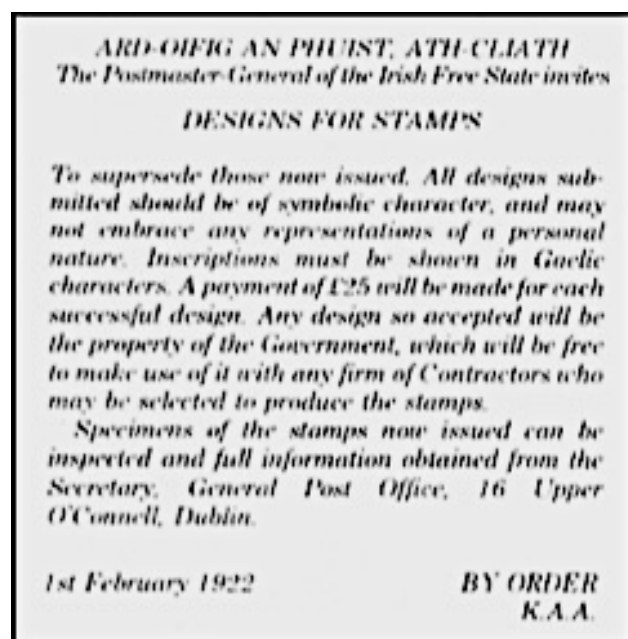
consequently sub-contracted the overprinting of four low-value stamps to Alex Thom Co., while they themselves overprinted eight low-value stamps and the three high-value stamps.

**February 17, 1922**

Overprinted stamps of Great Britain were released throughout the Irish Free State.

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT DESIGNS

Copy of the invitation for the submission of designs for the first permanent stamp issue is shown below. The invitation was released by J. J. Walsh on February 1, 1922.



During the month following the announcement, some 129 design entries were received by the GPO. However, the official records only list 75 design entries. Whilst these numbers do not take into account submissions by printing firms and designs submitted by prominent artists, it does appear that many submissions remain unaccounted for if the published figure of 129 design submissions is correct.

## SHORTLISTED DESIGNS

From the many design submittals, a Dublin press release in mid 1922 announced that five designs were being considered by the Provisional Irish Government.

Of these designs, three essays were finally selected. Interestingly for the fourth stamp design adopted there appears to have been no supporting essay. The fourth design displays the 'Sword of Light', which denotes 'Resurgence'.

The five 'considered' designs and the 'Sword of light' are shown in the next column



## DESIGNS SELECTED

**Mr. James Ingram**

**A - Map of Ireland** essay adopted for the 1d, 1½d, and 2d stamps. For the key 2d value, the original plan was to use the Coat of Arms design (E), however due to late design changes and recognizing the demands to have this value released on the anniversary of Independence, the Map design took its place.

**Ms. Lily Williams**, a prominent Dublin Artist

**B - Celtic Cross** essay adopted for the 3d and 10d stamps. This particular essay by Ms. Williams is an adaptation of her earlier design, which was used as a Sinn Fein propaganda label, during the period 1907 until 1916. Interestingly during this period such propaganda labels were deemed to be illegal.

**Mr. J. J. O'Reilly**

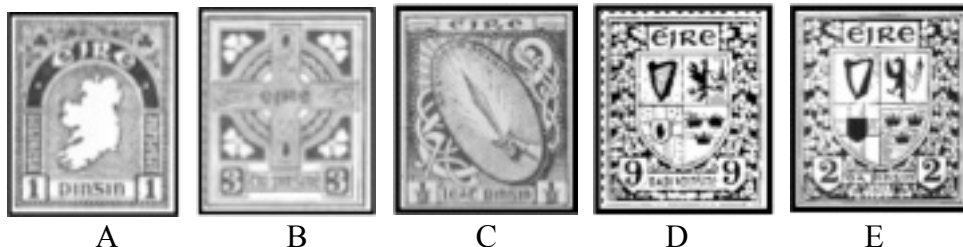
**C - Sword of Light** essay adopted for the ½d, 5d, 6d and 1s stamps.

**Ms. Millicent Girling** of the Dublin School of Art

**D - Coat of Arms** essay adopted for the 2½d, 4d and 9d stamps

**E - Essay** originally selected for use with the 2d. stamp but as mentioned, this design was subject to many changes resulting in the die proofs not being approved by the Inland Revenue Stamping Department at Somerset House until divers dates in April and May 1923, for the three values now with this design.





The five essays: A, B, C, and D reflect changes made to the original design submissions by the Irish Post Office, the Coat of Arms 2d essay (E) at the stage was ruled out as major design changes were deemed necessary.

## FROM DESIGN TO PRINTERS PLATES

### Map of Ireland - 2d. Stamp

For the simpler Map design the engraved master die was completed on July 12, 1922 and submitted to the various authorities for approval on August 25, 1922.

Die for leads with addition of value, submitted on September 6, 1922 and approved by Somerset House on September 11, 1922.

Die proofs before hardening were then prepared on September 12, 1922 and which were then approved by Somerset House on October 11, 1922.

From the 'leads' a forme made up of 240 images, comprising two 12 x 10 panes was produced. This forme was then used to produce a copper shell,

which after proofing was 'hardened'. The shell was then backed with molten metal type and became the master plate. Next followed the taking of black mineral wax moulds from the master plate. When hardened the moulds were first coated with a nickel film followed by the formation of copper shells, both steps using the electroplating process. The final phase was the hardening of the shells which when backed with type metal became the printers working plates.

## PRINTING FROM START TO FINISH

The summary below highlights the various stages in the production process, from paper stock to sheets of postage stamps ready for counter use.

The firms involved with the first printing of the 2d. stamp, which was released on December 6, 1922, are also named.

### MILL SHEETS

- *Mill sheets produced by William Joynson & Sons, Kent, England*
- *Dandy Roll watermarking using dies made by Edwin Amies & Son, London (subject to validation)*
- *Watermarked paper divided into Mill Sheets by Joynson, measuring 22<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 21<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches*
- *Mill Sheets consigned to De La Rue, London - contractor appointed by the Irish Postal Authority*

### SHEET PREPARATION & PRINTING

- *Sheet Gumming by sub-contract to Samuel Jones & Co, London*
- *Paper Glazing by De La Rue or possibly Samuel Jones & Co*
- *Printers Plates by the Royal Mint under auspices of the Inland Revenue, Somerset House, London*
- *Typograph printing by Government Printing Works, Dublin and/or De La Rue using Wharfedale presses by W. Dawson & Sons, Yorkshire, England (reference to De la Rue relates to 2d Map stamp)*
- *Printing Ink supply by Slater & Palmer, London*
- *Mill Sheets guillotined into 'sets' by De La Rue (for the first issue of the 2d map stamp)*
- *Sheet (Set) Perforating by De La Rue. Perforating machines made by Grover & Co, London*
- *Sheet Trimming by De La Rue before consignment to the Irish Post Office, Dublin*
- *2d Map stamp issued at Post Offices in County Dublin on December 6, 1922*

## FIRST DEFINITIVE STAMP RELEASED

On December 6, 1922 the Irish Postal Authority released the first definitive stamp.

Its release coincided with the anniversary of the Treaty being signed, coupled with the formal recognition of the Irish Free State.

Interestingly the distribution of this particular stamp was only made available at Post Offices in County Dublin.

## BACKGROUND TO FIRST STAMP RELEASE

- Irish Post Office (IPO) Stores Department, Aldborough House, Dublin commissioned De La Rue to perform print trials, using 'SE' watermarked paper.
- De La Rue were then awarded a contract, against their tender of June 4, 1922, to gum and plate glaze 10 Tons of watermarked mill sheets, being produced by the Joynson Mill under the auspices of the IPO.
- From records it is evident that Joynson were only able to make available 3 tons of mill sheets, and that this first part delivery could only be effected circa November 6, 1922.
- Now taking account that the Grover perforating machines being installed at the Government Printing House, Dublin Castle were behind schedule, the IPO expanded De La Rue's contract to include the guillotining of mill sheets and perforating.
- General comments :
  - Dublin was in the grip of civil disorder, giving rise to the disruption of essential services and uncertainty;
  - The setting up of production facilities at Dublin Castle was falling behind schedule;
  - That British firms were involved in most aspects of the printing process and material supplies; and
  - The IPO was operationally inexperienced with the new printing process.

**Against this background, in my unqualified opinion, De La Rue's involvement may also have included the actual printing of the first definitive stamp. If this premonition is proven to be correct, it would have been very embarrassing to the Irish Government, had it been known that they were still reliant on Great Britain, despite being independent and having a declared policy of import substitution. As a result there could well have been a cover up, hence no references in the records of the time?**



A first day usage

My reasoning, when considering the known facts, is that to have risked the printing to be done only by the Government Printing Works in Ireland, due to the subsequent need to engage De La Rue to perforate printed sheets, a step which gave rise to trans-shipment to and from to Dublin, made the operation just too vulnerable. With such critical time frames prevailing, an initial printing in Ireland is considered most unlikely.

In effect there were only 30 days from receipt of mill sheets by De La Rue to stamps being placed on sale in Dublin on December 6, 1922.

Taking account of deadlines, coupled with the fact that only 3 tons of printed sheets were initially made available, helps explain the reason why distribution was restricted to Post Offices in County Dublin. In effect the first printing of the 2d Map stamp could be considered as a Commemorative, it was released on the anniversary of the Independence Treaty, being signed in London.

Records clearly indicate that the 2d Map stamp was reissued in late December 1922 and that these printings made full use of the facilities, which were now operational at the Government Printing Works, Dublin Castle.

In further support of the theory that the first printings were carried out in London and that the reissued stamps were printed in Ireland are stamp shade variations, from the original Pearl Green with a Deep Sea Green shade to a Pearl Green with a Deep Blue Green shade for the second issue.

At the time of Government Printing Works taking the lead role De La Rue's involvement was restricted to the gumming and glazing of mill sheets, initially using up the balance of 7 tons of the mill sheets outstanding from the original supply contract.



# STRABANE – AN INTRODUCTION TO THE POSTMARKS and POSTAL HISTORY

Alan Kane



fig 3 – note the PAID mark at top left

Strabane is situated in the west of Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland, next to the border with Co Donegal. It was very early in having a Post Office and the records show that it was opened by 1659, it being mentioned in the '1659 accounts of the Irish Post Office' held at the British Museum in London. The list shows Roger Joans as Postmaster with a salary of £24 per year.

The almanac of 1729 records Strabane as being 114 miles from Dublin with three posts per week. A report in the Belfast Newsletter of 7 July 1786 stated that in place of the present route to Derry via Newry, the post will branch off from Drogheda, six times a week, through the towns of Collon, Ardee, Carrickmacross, Monaghan, Aughnacloy, Omagh and Strabane. The 1809 Parliamentary Papers record Francis Rogan as Postmaster at £38 per annum. Piggott's Directory in 1824 shows Oliver Jenkins as Postmaster with his office at New Street and the 1839 Londonderry Standard Directory gives the name of A Jenkins, also at New Street.

Strabane's claim to philatelic fame must surely be that of having the first recorded Straight Line Town Name stamp in the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. It is recorded as having been used in March 1698. This item was auctioned by Harmers in London in October 1976 and realised £480 (surely c£3,000 plus today) against a then estimate of £250. (fig 1 – next column). So far as is known this example is unique

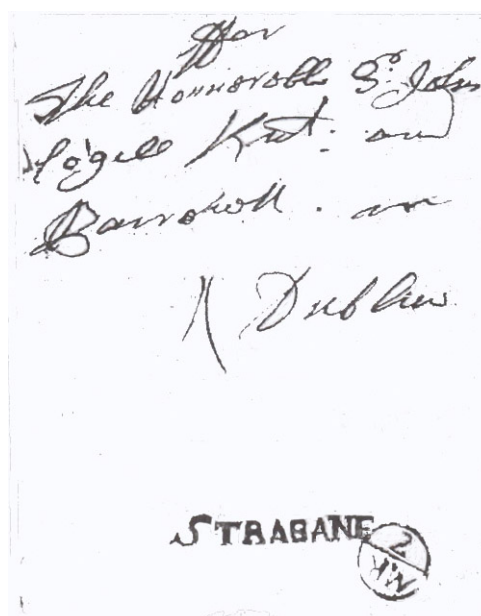


fig 1 – the 1698 mark – much computer enhanced

Another very early mark is to be found in the archives of the Public record office of Northern Ireland, dating from 1744/45. (not shown).

Variations of the Straight Line Town Name continued into the early 1800s (fig 2 on the following page shows a typical example). A two line Mileage Mark 'STRABANE/ 100' was in use c1810 to 1832 (fig 3 – above) showing the distance from Dublin (in Irish miles). From about 1831 until the late 1850s a double arc date stamp was struck on the reverse of mail as a transit mark. (fig 4).





Strabane Head Office c1905 – at the corner of Main Street and Bridge Street; earlier locations had been at Patrick Street/New Street until about 1840 and then at Abercorn Square (the former New Street) from about 1840 until late in 1879 when it moved to the above site

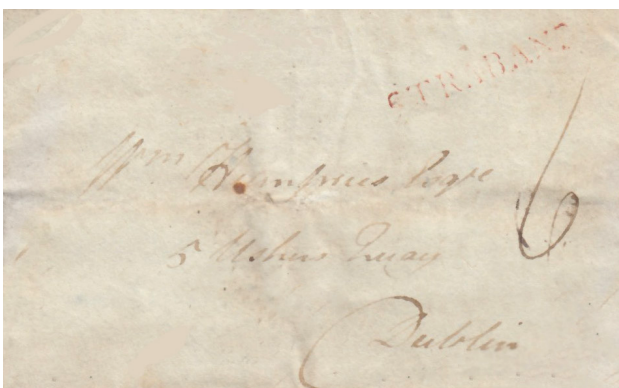


fig 2 – usage in 1804 showing a charge of 6d (the over 80 mile rate) which was the maximum charge at this time for a single letter within Ireland.

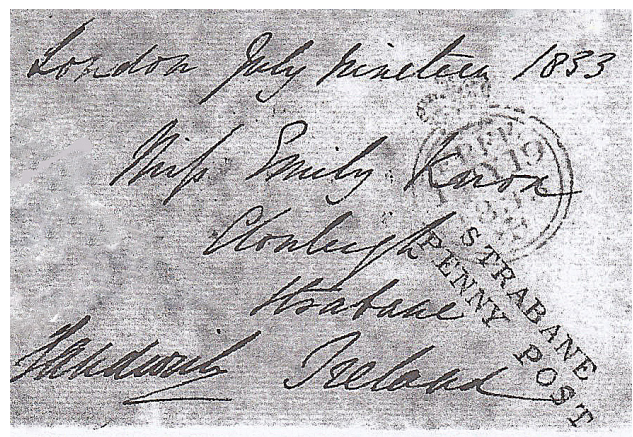


fig 5



fig 4 (fig 3 is shown at top of previous page)

A two line mark 'STRABANE PENNY POST' was in use from about 1830 to 1840 (fig 5), this used on items passing through the Receiving Houses (or Penny Post Offices) under the control of Strabane.

During this period Receiving House numbers can be found on covers. I have recorded No1 (Lifford – fig 6) and No2 (Killygordon – fig 7). Note the different styles of these two marks – both shown below.

Between 1846 and 1851 the number of Receiving Houses increased to four. Each was issued with a two line 'italic' handstamp reading respectively, Clady Tyrone/ Strabane, Manorcunningham/ Strabane, Killygordon/ Strabane (fig 8 on next page) Lifford/ Strabane



figs 6 and 7



The last three of these offices are situated in Co Donegal. In the period immediately prior to partition in 1922, Strabane was to serve as Head Office for as much as half of that County.

In 1844 Strabane was issued with a diamond mark – 412 – which it used until the introduction of the ‘spoon’ postmarks in 1856. I am able to show an example of the so-called ‘Irish’ spoon on the front cover, this posted at Lifford and addressed to New Orleans in 1857 attracting a 5cent internal postage charge in the USA. This postmark is recorded as being used at Strabane from 3 April 1857 to 20 April 1859.



fig 8 – the Killygordon Receiving House mark, computer enhanced.

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## NORTHERN IRELAND - WARTIME AIRMAIL TO BRITAIN

Editor



October 1942 Belfast to London by airmail



August 1943, Annaghloy, Co Down to Aldershot by airmail

In recent months I have picked up a couple of very ordinary looking covers which at first, looking so unexciting, I all but overlooked – both are shown above. The subject of internal airmail between Northern Ireland and Britain has not to my knowledge been aired in these columns previously and I am hoping that we have an expert amongst our ranks able to tell us more. For me the covers pose several questions.

First, when did the service start? Did it operate before the outbreak of war? I have seen post war ‘flown’ items and believe the service became ‘all up’ c1947; is this assumption correct?

What was the routing? Was it via Liverpool or Glasgow – surely not direct to London?

What volumes were flown? I have not consciously seen such covers before and am tempted to think that such items, requiring payment of an additional 3d ‘air fee’, may not be especially common?

Did any equivalent service operate from Dublin? If so, does anyone have any examples?

Finally, how much time was actually saved? Did such items receive ‘express’ censorship? Where did censorship take place? Belfast? Liverpool? The Belfast item has been examined by censor ‘978’ – does that provide any clue? Sadly the other cover has been slightly cut down making the censor’s number unreadable.

I would like to know more and would welcome correspondence on this possibly previously unresearched subject.

*John Lennon tells me he has been busy at the archives examining the story of Irish Postal Orders – another subject that I believe not to have been examined in any detail in this Journal previously. He tells me that will he have a substantial article ready for our September issue – we look forward to it – Ed.*

(Previous rates table was effective from 21st July 2016)



*Registered letter posted on 9 March 2017 (17068) at the pre 13 April 2017 rate of €6.25 made up of 3 x N stamps (then 72c each) plus €4.09. €4.09 stamp purchased and the letter posted from the main post office in Drogheda*

Postal rates changed with effect from Thursday 13th April 2017. The basic inland rate for the first weight step increased by a massive 28c from 72c to €1.00 and for overseas by 25c from €1.10 to €1.35. This represents increases of 39% and 23% respectively. Other rates increased by anything between 3% and 27%. Inland rates suffered the largest increases.

The background to the latest increase goes back to March of this year when An Post told the Government (and the Regulator) that it would face cash-flow difficulties the following month unless it could immediately increase its tariffs. The company stated that it would be unable to meet its €10 million-a-week wage bill unless it received an immediate cash injection by way of a price increase. An Post told the Government that it needed the immediate increase in order to stabilise its financial position for a period of 18-24 months. It would use this period to introduce a wide-ranging restructuring plan which is likely to see huge changes introduced to the semi-state company.

For some years, the near annual price increases were subject under legislation to a price cap linked with inflation. The legislation to abolish this cap was passed in March 2017. This paved the way for an increase in tariffs after a short notice period and the introduction of the new rates on 13 April 2017.

It is understood An Post is now looking at several possibilities over the next 18-24 month period regarding the future of the service. It is speculated that this will include the closure of between 80 and 400 rural post offices, the closure of two temporary sorting centres in Dublin, and the downsizing and the possible closure of two of An Post's four sorting centres as the company looks to parcel deliveries for increased revenue. The four permanent sorting centres are located in Athlone, Cork, Dublin and Portlaoise. The mail centre in Athlone is believed to be most under threat, while Portlaoise - which deals with parcels and mail - could be scaled back. (Update your postmark collection now!)

An Post delivers two million letters daily but has the capacity to deal with four million. It is thought the changes being considered across the company could result in between 1,000 and 1,500 job losses.

Last month in its Annual Report for 2016, An Post reported a €15.6m pre-tax loss for the year. Revenues of €825.7m were in line with the prior year (€826.1m) due to strong performances by An Post's subsidiary companies. Letter volumes were down 5.2% on the prior year. Since 2007, in line with global trends, letter volumes in Ireland have fallen by 40%. An Post incurred a loss of €41.3m in delivering its Universal Service Obligation in 2016 while Quality-of-Service measures showed An Post to be among the best postal services in Europe. I now list the new rates overpage.





*Express post letter with €7.25 stamp purchased and posted from the post office at 153 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9 on the first day of the new rate - 13 April 2017 (17103) (Illustrations on pages 42 and 43 courtesy of Brian Harmon)*

#### **Ireland (including N. Ireland)**

| Weight not over | Letter / Postcard | Large Envelope | Packet |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|
| 100g            | €1.10             | €1.65          | €3.30  |
| 250g            |                   | €2.10          | €4.30  |
| 500g            |                   | €2.80          | €5.25  |
| 1kg             |                   |                | €8.00  |
| 2kg (max)       |                   |                | €9.00  |

A reduced rate applies to meter mail – The reductions of 10c (letters and postcards), 10c (large envelopes) and 20c (packets) applies for all weight steps i.e. the same reduction irrespective of the weight of each item.

#### **Europe (including Great Britain)**

| Weight not over | Letter/ Postcard | Large Envelope | Packet |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------|
| 100g            | €1.35            | €2.50          | €4.50  |
| 250g            |                  | €4.25          | €5.50  |
| 500g            |                  | €5.50          | €6.50  |
| 1kg             |                  |                | €9.00  |
| 2 kg (max)      |                  |                | €12.25 |

#### **Rest of the World**

| Weight not over | Letter/ Postcard | Large Envelope | Packet |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------|
| 100g            | €1.35            | €2.50          | €4.50  |
| 250g            |                  | €4.25          | €5.50  |
| 500g            |                  | €5.50          | €6.50  |
| 1kg             |                  |                | €12.25 |
| 2kg (max)       |                  |                | €18.50 |

## REGISTRATION AND EXPRESS RATES

| Registration    |         |                                                              |         |               |         | Express        |                                    |                                      |
|-----------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------|---------|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Weight not over | Ireland | All Other Countries                                          |         |               |         | Ireland        | Europe (incl. GB) (see list below) | Australia, Canada, New Zealand & USA |
| 100g            | €7.00   | €7.50 (letters); €8.50 (large envelopes)<br>€10.75 (packets) |         |               |         | €7.25          | €11.00                             | €11.00                               |
| Weight not over | Ireland | Europe (incl. GB)                                            |         | Rest of World |         | Ireland        | Europe (incl. GB) (see list below) | Australia, Canada, New Zealand & USA |
|                 |         | Large Letters                                                | Packets | Large Letters | Packets | All Categories |                                    |                                      |
| 250g            | €7.50   | €10.50                                                       | €11.75  | €10.50        | €11.75  | €9.00          | €12.25                             | €12.25                               |
| 500g            | €8.50   | €11.75                                                       | €13.00  | €11.75        | €13.00  | €10.25         | €14.00                             | €14.00                               |
| 1kg             | €11.50  |                                                              | €16.00  |               | €19.75  | €12.25         | €17.25                             | €20.25                               |
| 2kg (max)       | €14.00  |                                                              | €19.75  |               | €27.25  | €16.25         | €21.25                             | €28.25                               |

**Registration Fees – Ireland (including N. Ireland):** The fees payable are inclusive of postage and cover compensation up to a maximum of €320. Additional compensation up to €1,500 or €2,000 is available for an additional fee of €4.50 or €5.50 respectively but to Republic of Ireland addresses only. €320 is the maximum limit for Northern Ireland. You can track and trace the item and view the recipient's signature on line.

**Registration Fees - All Other Countries (including Great Britain):** The compensation limit for Great Britain is €320, for Europe €150 and for all other countries €35. These limits are unchanged. You can track and trace items up to dispatch from Ireland. In practice, I have found that items posted to the UK and numerous other countries can also be fully tracked on line. A copy of the recipient's signature can also be obtained on request from An Post Customer Services (It can then be viewed on line as per Express mail – see below).

**Express - Ireland:** The fee applies to all Irish destinations (including N. Ireland). Next working day delivery is guaranteed to Republic of Ireland addresses. A signature and insurance option is available for an additional €2.00 (unchanged) which gives compensation up to a maximum of €350 (i.e. greater than the basic compensation maximum for the inland registration service). This additional insurance option is only available in respect of mail to Republic of Ireland addresses. All items can be tracked via An Post's website and, if the additional €2 fee has been paid, you can also view the recipient's signature on line for up to a month after delivery.

**Dublin Area:** A same day service is also available within the Dublin area for €8.50 (Max. 2kg.). The letter/packet must be posted (times of posting vary) at one of 43 (previously 23) designated post offices in the Dublin area. This service has been in operation since 2014. Note no postage stamp is affixed to the item only a special label.

**Express Service – Europe and Rest of World:** This service is only available to Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France (incl. Corsica and Monaco), Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and USA (unchanged). No signature or insurance option is available outside Ireland but the Track and Trace system also operates to these destinations. The minimum envelope size acceptable for items destined for the USA is C5. A complimentary Easi Pak is available at post offices counters if the item is destined for the USA and is smaller than C5 in size.

**Maximum dimensions of a Letter / Postcard:** 235mm x 162mm x 5mm thickness (i.e. C5 size). (Also known as "POP" or Post Office Preferred Size). Above 100grms, the large envelope or packet rate applies for all destinations.

**Maximum dimensions of a Large Envelope:** 400mm x 300mm x 25mm thickness (i.e. C4 size). (Also known as a "Flat"). Above 500grms, the packet rate applies for all destinations.

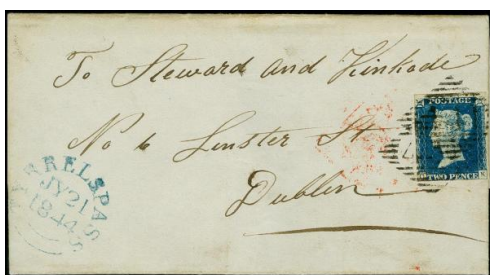
**Dimensions of a Packet:** Maximum dimensions are a combined length, width and depth of 900mm. No dimension can exceed 600mm.



## AUCTION WATCH - Erinman

The Heinrich-Kohler sale held between 20 and 25 March 2017 contained several sections of Irish stamps and postal history with early postal history (pre1900) generally exceeding estimate.

One of the top prices achieved was attained by an 1840 GB 2d blue with 'good to large margins' on entire letter cancelled by 441 diamond numeral with adjacent blue circular Tyrrelspass dated JY 21 1844 addressed to Dublin. The item, shown below, sold for euro1300 against an estimate of euro600.



An entire registered letter with faint red CAVAN/54 and clear red circular registered 7 JA 1831 to Loughbrickland made doubled its pre-sale estimate selling for euro600, illustrated below.



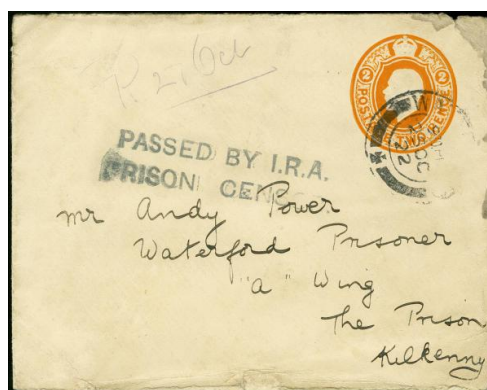
Maritime items also fared well with a good realisation obtained for a "superb strike" of the rare fancy framed 'BELFAST/SHIP LETTER' in black (Robertson S4) on entire letter dated 1817 from Pittsburgh to Coleraine. This exhibition quality item went under the hammer for euro1000, estimate euro400.

Continuing the maritime theme a boxed straight line 'SHIP SAILED' in black applied at Queenstown on an entire from New York to Queenstown dated 3 January 1900 with accompanying circular rimmed returned letter branch Cork in black, achieved euro300, estimate euro200.

A halfpenny green 1922 Saorstat marginal block of six ex Preston and Brady collections, hinged at top left and in margin displaying the variety 'accent inserted by hand twice once inverted', (HIB T47ba) the centre pair of stamps containing the variety

being unmounted mint sold at its estimate of euro400.

A cover (below) hand stamped 'PASSED BY IRA PRISON CENSOR' in two lines in black on a 2d GB KGV stamped stationery envelope from Waterside to a prisoner in Kilkenny sold for euro300, estimate euro200. Items from the civil war period continue to be in demand.



Whilst on the subject of censorship during the 'Troubles', I must draw attention to an item seen on Ebay recently in which a black cachet has been applied to a 1919 postcard from Fermoy reading 'Republican Censor/Spies & Informers/beware'. In my opinion, (and mine too – Ed!) this is an obvious forgery – the cachet appears to have been applied with a modern 'Trodal Printy' rubber stamp. I did not keep a note of how much the unsuspecting buyer paid but it was not a small sum. Do please take care when buying any such items on Ebay or any other such source; if in doubt ask for an extension/certificate – I suspect you might not get it!

Elsewhere, in the Kelleher sale of 2 May 2017 a used example of the 1934 2d pearl green perf 15 x imperf (SG74b) with partial Loch Garman postmark but with BPA certificate reached \$1100 just exceeding the lower estimate of \$1000.

Pick of the items in the Warwick and Warwick sale of 1 March 2017 was an unmounted mint top marginal example of MW T59A Major Re-entry R1/S2 with accompanying MW certificate 1985 and also Richter certificate 1993. The item sold for £400 but well below the estimate of £500.

Our editor tells me that attended the Cavendish sale of 15/16 March where there was a small offering of unusual postal history items but mainly fronts. There appeared to be relatively little interest in these, however if the offerings had been entire items that would have been a very different matter!

## JOHN GREER

### AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR INCOMING PRESIDENT

I took a few minutes out when in Belfast for the AGM to corner incoming President John Greer

*SC John – I know you as a ‘Dublin boy’ but nothing about your philatelic interests*

*JG* I schooled at King’s Inn and later at Kimmage and, yes, like everybody else I’ve been collecting since a kid. I started collecting with anything I could get hold, you did in those days, but then just looked at Ireland, first tried to specialize with the overprints, the varieties, I find them fascinating and then found myself collecting everything but the kitchen sink, that led me to join the IPS (Irish Philatelic Society).

*SC And then to the IPC?*

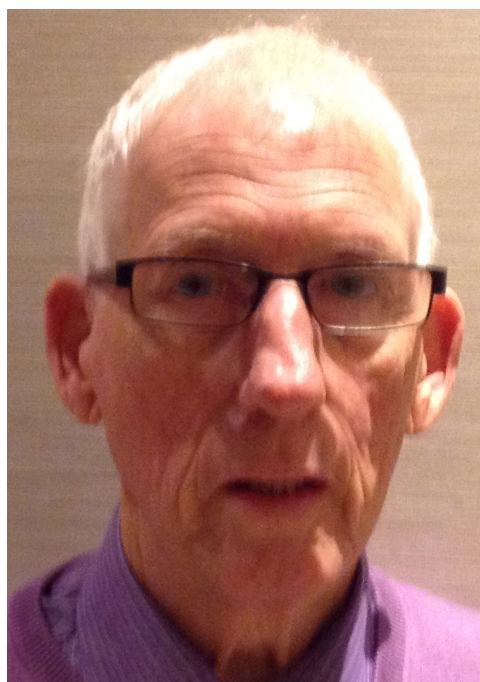
*JG* That was about 15 years ago. I’d enjoyed the displays at the IPS, the postal history especially. I can’t remember who it was that persuaded me but whatever it was a good decision. As time went on I got interested in different things, a niche collection is Official Mail of the 1916-22 period when the British Forces were in Ireland, with the Field POs etc – interesting material. From there I’ve also collected Irish Military mail in general, the Irish troops in the Lebanon, Congo, Cyprus and their various other involvements – that all sprung out of the Official mail, one’s always looking for the rare bits! One thing leads to another and I then looked at the years of the troubles in the North and built up a related display of all general Military interest here in Ireland. I enjoy the Circle, the Journal is good now that it’s all in colour and I especially like Brian’s contributions.

*SC Do you collect anything outside Ireland?*

*JG* Surely, the IPS also led me into thematics and amongst other things such as postboxes, I found myself building up a thematic collection of lighthouses and I’ve concentrated in the New Zealand Life Insurance Department stamps – they all have lighthouses on them – that’s become a serious specialization, I’ve looked at the various printings, watermarks etc and the stamps from 1947 until they stopped were very attractive – all with lighthouses!

*SC That’s difficult material to get in Ireland.*

*JG* Very little in Ireland – it mainly comes from New Zealand dealers and auctions, No! I’ve never been there although obviously I’d like to do so. Their archive department has been very helpful and sent me a lot of information.



I’ve also bought a few in the UK. Andy Ballard, the UK dealer, has also looked out some material for me; I think he does quite a lot of NZ in addition to his Irish. The collection has built up nicely; I’ve shown it at Stampa and it is about to be shown at the Finlandia show in May.

*SC Interesting and I think a good choice. But, John you also have a life outside stamps?*

*JG* Surely! By trade I’m an electrician, I had a spell in the UK, went there on holiday in 1963 and didn’t come home until 1971. I’ve had my own business these last 22 years; I’ll be 73 in August and it’s time to wind down – I’m two thirds of the way there now; there’s plenty of work around but nothing too heavy at my age, a bit of consulting when I can get it. I want to do some travel, there is a major show in Prague next year which I have my eye on; in fact I hope to go wherever there is a show and take in the sights etc, not just going for the stamps but also to see a bit of the world. But above all I have 4 children, 5 grandchildren and now a great grandchild and they all keep me busy – always plenty to do. As for the IPC, I’d hope to see the membership grow and that the Circle gives enjoyment to as many collectors as possible; that will mainly be achieved by the Journal. Then, there is Stampa, with which I am much involved and on the Committee. I shall try and plug the Circle at Stampa and also at the IPS and Dublin Stamp Society of which I am also a long term member. There’s always much to do.

*SC Thank you John – a busy man!*



## THE IRISH ABROAD - PART 12

Brian Warren

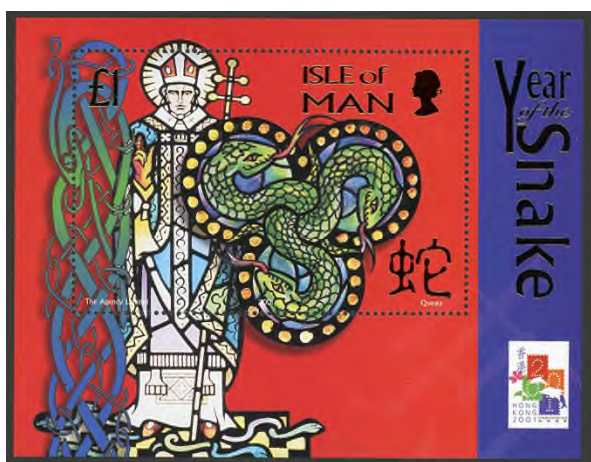


fig. 1

Continuing with the Isle of Man, on 22 January 2001, a miniature sheet was issued to mark the Chinese New Year. 2001 was the Year of the Snake. The illustration on the sheet features "St Patrick and Snakes" (fig. 1). All sheets also include the "Hong Kong 2001" exhibition logo. I'm not aware of St Patrick having any association with the Isle of Man but it is an attractive sheet.



fig 2

fig 3



fig 4

On 17 May 2001 a specific set commemorating Joey Dunlop was issued following his death the previous year (figs. 2 to 8).



fig. 5

fig. 6



fig. 7



fig. 8



The six stamps feature Joey Dunlop on a Rea Yamaha, Parliament Square, 1977 (22p), at Governor's, 1983 TT (26p), Leaving Ramsey, 1988 TT Races (36p), on a Honda motorbike, 1991 (45p), on a 250cc Honda at Ballaspur, 1999 (65p) and on the Mountain (77p).



fig 9

A set of six postcards was issued on the same date showing the stamp designs and enlarged

photographs on the obverse side (77p design illustrated on the previous page - *fig. 9*) and Douglas Postage Paid impressions on the reverse (Sold at £5.71 per set).



*fig. 10*

The 50th anniversary of Yamaha (motorbike manufacturer) was commemorated in 2005 with a six stamp set. The 29p value (*fig. 10*) features both Joey Dunlop and Ray McCullough each on Yamaha bikes. Considered by many to be second only to Joey Dunlop when it comes to naming Northern Ireland's best ever racer, McCullough enjoyed his greatest success in his homeland winning the Ulster Grand Prix on 12 occasions and the North West 200 on seven. He won countless road races and Championships in Ireland. He never contested the TT, being reluctant to travel.



*fig. 11*

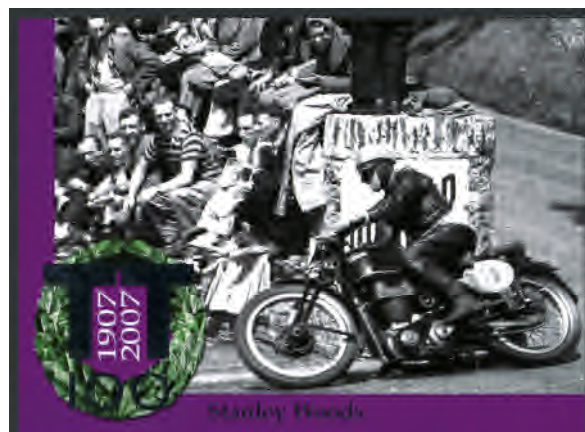


*fig. 12*

The Centenary of the Isle of Man TT Motor Cycle Races was marked in 2007 by the release of a ten stamp set. One of the five UK values (then 31p) featured Joey Dunlop (*fig. 11*). One of the five E values (then 44p) featured Stanley Woods (*fig. 12*). His biographical details are set out in Part 10 of this series. Both the UK and E stamps were each issued as separate five stamp se-tenant strips. The full set was also re-issued later in the year in a sheetlet containing the two blocks of five stamps and five se-tenant labels separated by an illustrated gutter.

A hardback souvenir book (price £30) contained a complete set of the foregoing issue in a smaller sheetlet format and perf. 15 (instead of 14½ for both types of sheets referred to above). Each stamp was printed in two vertical strips of five

and includes a single label. The sheetlet was also available separately at £5.



*fig. 13*

In addition, a set of ten postcards was produced which on the obverse side reproduced the full picture from which the stamp design was taken (*fig. 13 - Stanley Woods*).



*fig. 14*

The reverse side had an imprinted stamp which reproduced the stamp design complete with "UK" or "E" as appropriate (*fig. 14 - Joey Dunlop*).



*fig. 15*

In July 2007 six stamp set featured maps of the Isle of Man. The 28p value shows a map by John Speed dating from 1605. As well as the Island, the map shows part of the east coast of Ireland and part of the English mainland.

*(to be continued)*